

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A skin massage device (10);

the device comprising a handset (100; 200; 300) connected to a machine body; said handset (100; 200; 300) in turn comprising a chamber (102; 202) closed by a deformable membrane (103; 203) which at least partly adheres to a patient's skin (S) by virtue of a vacuum generated in said chamber (102; 202) by a vacuum generating device (12) when the handset is placed over the skin to treat the skin;

wherein the device (10) comprises means (13) for producing a variable vacuum in said chamber (102; 202) to deform said membrane (103; 203) thereby lifting, folding, compressing, and smoothing the patient's skin (S);

wherein said membrane (103) comprises a central portion (103b) having a plurality of holes (103c) for lifting a portion (S1) of the skin (S); and two lateral portions (103d, 103e), thicker than said central portion (103b), which are movable by the vacuum generated inside the chamber (102);

wherein each of said lateral portions (103d, 103e) has two projections (103f, 103g);

wherein the central portion (103b) extends transversely across a surface of the membrane (103) between the two lateral portions (103d, 103e); and

wherein the plurality of holes (103c) of the central portion (103b) are aligned and spaced from one another between the two lateral portions (103d, 103e); and

wherein the membrane has a peripheral groove (103a) into which a bottom edge (102a) of the chamber is inserted such that only the membrane contacts the skin when the handset is placed over the patient's skin.

Claims 2-8 (Canceled)

9. (Previously presented) A device (10) as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said membrane (103; 203) is disposable separately from said device.

Claims 10 - 12 (Canceled)

13. (Previously presented) A device (10) as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said handset (100; 200; 300) has means for activating and programming said device.

14. (Previously presented) A device (10) as claimed in Claim 13, wherein said means (11) for activating and programming said device is programmable to perform pulsating treatment cycles of a patient's skin (S) as determined by an operator.

15. (Previously presented) A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein each of said lateral portions has through holes by which to lift and treat the skin.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled)

18. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 1, wherein the central portion (103b) has one central hole and two lateral holes which are aligned and spaced from

one another between the two lateral portions (103d, 103e).

19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 19, wherein the central portion (103b) and the two lateral portions (103d, 103e) are substantially aligned with one another.

21. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 1, wherein the two lateral portions (103d, 103e) extend transversely across a surface of the membrane (103) and the two projections (103f, 103g) of each of the two lateral portions (103d, 103e) are spaced transversely from one another.

22. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 21, wherein the projections (103f, 103g) of the lateral portions (103d, 103e) are substantially dome-shaped.

23. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 1, wherein the central portion is convex with respect to the chamber (102; 202) and the lateral portions (103d, 103e) are concave with respect to the chamber (102; 202).

24. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 23, wherein the projections (103f, 103g) of the lateral portions (103d, 103e) form knuckles over the concave lateral portions (103d, 103e).

25. (New) A skin massage device; the device comprising a handset connected to a machine body; said handset in turn comprising a chamber closed by a deformable membrane which at least partly adheres to a patient's skin by virtue of a vacuum generated in said chamber by a vacuum generating device when the handset is placed over the skin to treat the skin;

 wherein the device comprises means for producing a variable vacuum in said chamber to deform said membrane thereby lifting, folding, compressing, and smoothing the patient's skin;

 wherein the membrane comprises:

- a central portion;
- a first lateral portion;
- a second lateral portion; and
- a plurality of projections;

 wherein the central portion extends transversely across a surface of the membrane and defines a plurality of holes spaced from one another aligned along a central axis such that, when the variable vacuum is generated, a lifting force is generated through the holes in a vertical direction in the central portion only; and

 wherein each of the plurality of projections is aligned either on the first lateral portion on a first side of the central portion or on the second lateral portion on a second, opposite side of the central portion whereby to form a first set of projections and a second set of projections, and wherein each of the lateral portions is offset from the central portion such that, when the variable vacuum is generated and skin is lifted in the vertical direction through the holes in the central axis, each of the first set of projections moves in a first oblique

direction with respect to the vertical direction and each of the second set of projections moves in a second oblique direction with respect to the vertical direction with the first and second set of projections moving toward each other to pinch the skin.

26. (New) A skin massage device according to claim 25, wherein the lateral portions have no holes.